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DETAILED ACTION

1. This is in response to the communications filed on 19 June 2009.
2. Claims 29, 31-42 and 44-56 are pending in the application.
3. Claims 29, 31-42 and 44-56 have been allowed.
4. Claims 1-28, 30 and 43 have been cancelled.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

5. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Brad C. Rametta on 22 July 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, further comprising storing with at least one of the administrator ~~devices~~ device and the administered ~~devices~~ device, a history record of communication items exchanged therebetween, the history record being agreed upon and signed by both the administrator device and the administered device.

Claim 36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, further comprising creating, by at least one of the administrator device and the administered device, digital signatures, wherein the digital signatures are under the full control of the ~~device~~ issuing such signatures at least one of the administrator device and the administered device that created the digital signatures.

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Claim 49. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 42, comprising means for creating, by at least one of the administrator device and the administered device, digital signatures, wherein the digital signatures are under the full control of the device issuing such signatures at least one of the administrator device and the administered device that created the digital signatures.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 29, 31-42 and 44-56 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to independent claim 29, prior art does not disclose, teach or fairly suggest arranging the communication in the form of a chain of digitally signed communication items including messages sent from an originator device to a recipient device, each the message having associated a respective digitally signed receipt; configuring the originator device not to send a new item toward the recipient device in the absence of a respective digitally signed receipt for a previously sent item; detecting, at the originator device, that a respective digitally signed receipt item from the recipient device failed to reach the originator device within a given time period after a message item was issued by the originator device; and asking the recipient device for a signed statement indicating at least one of a last message item received and a last message item sent by the recipient device.

As to independent claim 42, prior art does not disclose, teach or fairly suggest not send a new item toward the recipient device in the absence of a respective digitally signed receipt for a previously sent item; detect that a respective digitally signed receipt item from the recipient device failed to reach the originator device within a given time period after a message item was

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issued by the originator device; and ask the recipient device for a signed statement indicating at least one of a last message item received and a last message item sent by the recipient device.

As to independent claim 55, prior art does not disclose, teach or fairly suggest not send a new item toward the recipient device in the absence of a respective digitally signed receipt for a previously sent item; detect that a respective digitally signed receipt item from the recipient device failed to reach the originator device within a given time period after a message item was issued by the originator device; and ask the recipient device for a signed statement indicating at least one of a last message item received and a last message item sent by the recipient device.

As to independent claim 56, prior art does not disclose, teach or fairly suggest arranging the communication in the form of a chain of digitally signed communication items including messages sent from an originator device to a recipient device, each the message having associated a respective digitally signed receipt; configuring the originator device not to send a new item toward the recipient device in the absence of a respective digitally signed receipt for a previously sent item; detecting, at the originator device, that a respective digitally signed receipt item from the recipient device failed to reach the originator device within a given time period after a message item was issued by the originator device; and asking the recipient device for a signed statement indicating at least one of a last message item received and a last message item sent by the recipient device.

Any claims not directly addressed are allowed on the virtue of their dependency.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

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fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ARAVIND K. MOORTHY whose telephone number is (571)272-3793. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William R. Korzuch can be reached on 571-272-7589. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Aravind K Moorthy/
Examiner, Art Unit 2431

/William R. Korzuch/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2431